## **AMERICA IN FRANCE**

V-Soissons

The first three definite spots in France, to leap into the 5, by of the headlines in back-home newspapers as the habitats of American fighting troops in the line were Lorraine. Toul and Solssons.

Lorraine was a whole region in itself, and merely put "somewhere in France" in a good-sized corner without trapping it. Toul, though a city and therefore a little more specific than a whole slice of country, represented a wide stretch of front and was itself so many kitometers behind the lines that its fame as a combut center was somewhat vicarious.

Solssons was not only a spot to be indicated by a pin on the map, but it was also very much in the war. Anybody who lived there between the first recoil of the Germans from the Manne to the Alsac-ion quite four years ago, and the capture of the city in the end of May offensive this year can fell you that.

Looking Down on City

### Looking Down on City

Looking Down on City
Today, American troops on the northern end of the line that has overrun the
Soissons-Châtenu-Thierry road can look
down into the city from the heights that
dominate it. Yesterday—or to be exact,
February 8, 1913—a New England division marched through Soissons to take
its place in-the line.
Soissons owns the unfortunate distinction of having been an age-long battle
ground.

ground.

"All Gaul," wrote Caesar, "is-divided into three parts." and his official Roman communique went on to state that the Belgae inhabitated one of the parts, and that Noviodunum was one of the Belgae strongholds. Noviodunum was Soissons. The latter name came from the Suessiones, a battling branch of the Belgae was the got their name written year, much who got their name written very much into Caesar's Commentaries.

### Saw Roman Downfall in Gaul

Saw Roman Downfall in Gaul
But it is with Roman downfall rather
than Roman domination that the name
of Soissons is the more closely associated.
For it was near Soissons that, in the
year 486, the great king of the Merovingian Franks, Clovis, a youth, of 20, obliterated in one fierce battle the last
trace of Roman usurpation of Gaul—
that is, France.
Clovis land the misfortune to be the
father of four sons, among whom his

Clovis and the misfortune to be the father of four sons, among whom his newly-won, salm land to be divided. The kingdom of the Franks became four kingdoms, and one of the four was the kingdom of Soissons, a bread region bounded rather hazily by the Seine, the Oureq and the lower Rhine.

Soissons then became early some to

Nobles Repair to Soissons
It was to Soissons that, in 1616, the rebellions nobles repaired during the bitter quarrel between them and the government during the regency of Marie of Medicis. Louis XII was king, but as he was only 15, he was not supposed to count. The nobles were proclaimed guilty of high treason, Soissons was besieged, and the downfall of the nobles scemed imminent where Concini, counsellor of the queen-nother and regent, was slini virtually at the young king?\* bidding. The nobles thereupon sped back to Paris, thinking that their power had returned to them. They were instaken, but that is a story which has nothing to do with Soissons.

In 1789 Soissons became a fortified city, forming a part of the lie of France. It was still a fortified city when, on September 11, 3870, the 13th corps of the German army stool before it find demanded its surrender. The relied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther than surrender, replied Commandant de Noue. And the Inhibit mits, surther

Siege Lasts 37 Days

A methodical Prussian siege began. The Soissonals were counting on the arrival of Bazaine, who was getting himself into a trap at Metz. The city was already suffering when the real bombards ment began on October 12. Forty-five heavy gaus plowed up its streets and houldings, settings a thousand fires, and kept up their deluge of shell for three days and nights. The surrender cause on October 16, after 37 days investiture.

The Prussians made prisoner in Soissons 90 officers and 4,633 men of the garrison, captured 128 cannon and made off with a strong box containing 192,000 francs. Soissons, when the pence conference sits after this war, will have a little grievance of its own to air.

A city does not have to be large to be famous, especially when, caught in the heart of buttle if finds the right to its possession disputed by two adversaries; yesterday it was only a little town which at a name; today the whole universe knows it. But it no longer exists.

Population Only 10,000

This is not quite true, perhaps, of Soissons. It is not large—its population, not counting the garrison, is, a little more than 10,000—but it is perhaps too big to be wiped quite of the earth even in such a town-blasting war as the present.

No story of Soissons would be complete without a name today the formuse of the more than 10,000—but it is perhaps too big to be wiped quite of the earth even in such a town-blasting war as the present.

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big to be wheel quite off the earth even in such a town-blasting war as the present.

No story of Solssons would be complete without some mention of the Solssons bean.

Boston baked beans owe their fame to the way they are cooked, but the glory of the Solssons bean is more peers liarly local. It is grown nowhere else, either in France or the rest of the world. It is large, something like our own lima, and its succulent peculiarity is that, though large, it is still tender and can be cooked after a minimum of soaking.

If you fall to order at least one roshit aux solssons before you leave France.

souking.

If you fail to order at least one rosbif pare solsaous before you leave France,
you will have one thing less to tell

### SONG OF THE GUNS

This is the song that our guns keep singing, Here where the dark steel shines: This is the song with their big shells winging Over the German lines—

Over the German lines—
"We are taking you home by the shortest way. We are taking you out of this blood and slime To the land you left in an ancient day, Where lost lanes wander at twillight time; We are bringing you peace. In the swift release From the grind where the gas drifts blur; On a steel shod track, We are taking you back to Her!"

This is the soug that our guys keep rearing.

This is the song that our guns keep roaring Out through the night and rain; This is the song with their big shells soaring Over the battered plain—

Over the battered plain—

"We are taking you home by the only was by the only road that will get you hack to the dreams you left where thet copie was given And the night wind sale of a long-lost tray. We are bringing you rest From the bitter test, From the pits where the great shells while Through the bloody loam, We are taking you home.

There is always in every hospital the embarrassed patient-in the center of a group of idolized wounded from the battlefield.
"How did you get hurt?" was asked of a depressed individual whose leg was supported just so by the overhead trolley system.

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## WHEN THE WOUNDED COME IN

Two soldiers lay side by side in an evacuation hospital. One was a browned, red headed doughboy with a broken arm. The other's head and face were bandaged so that only his mouth and chin were visible.

The doughboy raised on his pillow and surveyed his neighbor.

"Say, what outfit are you out of buddy?" he asked. "Your mug looks kind of familiar and I've been trying oldre you."

"Company I, —Infantry," said he of the bandaged head.

"So am I. Who the deuce are you?"

"I," said the other, "am the captain."

There was a bandage over his eye.

"Anything else the matter with you?" asked the surgeon who was standing beside his sof.

There was a bandage over his eye.
"Anything else the matter with you?"
asked the surgeon who was standing be-

asked the surgeon who was standing es-side his sot.

"Well," he drawled, "I got hit up there near the eye, but that ain't much."

"Yes," persisted the surgeon, "but did you get hit anywhere else?"

Then he admitted that, come to think of it, he had a broken arm, a broken leg, and a bullet in his side.

dom of Soissons, a bread region bounded rather hazily by the Seine, the Ourca and the lower Rhine.

Soissons, then, became early a name to conjure with. It was natural that, when the last half of the 12th and first half of the 13th centuries saw cathedral after eathedral towering into arduously wrought and magnificent being in city after city, saw rise the groins and buttresses and spires of Rheims, Chartres, Laugres, Bourges, and of Our Lady of Paris liself—it was natural that.

Soissons should be among them.

Nobles Repair to Soissons
It was to Soissons that, in 1616, the rebellions nobles repaired during the researcy of Marie to Muldies Touis VIII was king that the covernment during the regency of Marie to Muldies Touis VIII was king the research of the declered in the leg."

soaking.

If you fail to order at least one rosbif nux soissons before you leave France, you will have one thing less to tell about.

Birthplace of Gallic Chiefs

Soissons was the birthplace of the Gallic chiefs Diviae and Galba, who caused Caesar considerable trouble; of the Merovingian kings Caribert, Chilperte, and of Quinquet, inventor of the smokeless, odorless unrefined oil lamp that still survives in the more ancient and humble French households.

And it is one of the thousand and one fronies of war that Soissons, with its proud history, should now have become a spot that men die for because it is the junction of three rail lines and haff a dozen roads.

## **POLITICAL ISSUES** REFUSE TO RAISE

Non-Partisan Plan Liked, **But Details Are Hard** to Pin Down

SOCIALISTS PLAN TO FIGHT

No Big Divisions in National Prob lems Around Which Trouble Can Be Started

[BY CABLE TO THE STARS AND STRIPES]

[By Carle to THE STARSAND STRIPES]

AMERICA, August 1.—Were it not for the war, our newspaper press would have had to fall back on the sea serpent story to provide news during the past week.

Things went along so smoothly that nobody could unearth a single sensation of importance, and all the big news was news to which the public has already become too accustomed to cause excitement, such as continued ship launching, increased augumentation of America's armed forces, steady progress in coordinating industrial efforts and adjusting labor and financial problems.

Lacking a real sensation, we tried energetically to raise some political sea serpents. So far the most feeble serpent of all is the political move for non-partisan Congressional elections next autumn.

Enthusiasm for the idea, as purely an idea, is truly vast, but there is some little difference as to details. At present, the Démocratic idea of the correct way to eliminate partisanship is for the Republicans to retire from the race, while the Republicans think it would be a much better telefing.

Some Coalitions-Certain

Some Coalitions-Certain Some Coalitions-Certain
The only thing the two parties are
passionately agreed upon is that the
Socialists must be beaten, and undoubtedly there will be at least some
local coalitions here and there for this

Apparell in French can mean any thing from an airplane to a moving-picture muchine, but in our hospitals it is means only the crellis-like arrangement over-the cot of a patient whose arm of leg has to be held suspended.

A man lay with This left leg on apparell and his bare foot sticking up inforspace. A piece of shrapnel had plerced in the seed of the cot of a patient whose arm of the space. A piece of shrapnel had plerced in the seed of the cot of the cot

that many Socialist leaders are under indictment.

As to unational issues, there is so far no big division on which a fight can be made. Both old parties absolutely agree on the principles for which we are at war and both vie with each other in declaring for support of the Government. The successful dispatch of a big army to Europe and the generally acknowledged success in practiculty alt the directions of our material activities, national and industrial, have unquestionably greatly minimized as a political factor any campaign fight to be made on the conduct of the war.

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Questions Answered

Questions Answered

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R.T.O.—The proper wines to serve with an Army dinner are: With the soup course, soup; with the meat course, coffee; with the dessert, more coffee if the tank isn't empty. Hocheimer and other wines of Germanic parentage should be studiously avoided, as they might give offense to some of your more or less pro-Ally guests—which is the kind of guest you will have to get gloons with for a good while over here, more or less.

T.T.I.—Croquet parties are extremely restful and soothing affairs, but should be staged with discretion, and never within seven kilos of the front line. If there are any people from Philadelphia, Boston or Brooklyn in the group you purpose to entertain, it is better to substitute some other game, as the sight of the old hoops and mallets would make them unbearably homesick.

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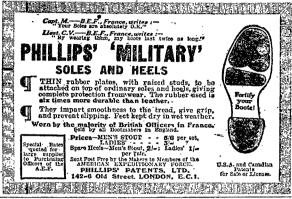
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